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When Nothing Else Works, Try This

CHARLES SCHWAB HAD A MILL MANAGER WHOSE PEOPLE WEREN'T producing their quota of work.

"How is it," Schwab asked him, "that a manager as capable as you can't make this mill turn out what it should?"

"I don't know," the manager replied. "I've coaxed the men, I've pushed them, I've sworn and cussed, I've threatened them with damnation and being fired. But nothing works. They just won't produce."

This conversation took place at the end of the day, just before the night shift came on. Schwab asked the manager for a piece of chalk, then, turning to the nearest man, asked: "How many heats did your shift make today?"

"Six."

Without another word, Schwab chalked a big figure six on the floor, and walked away.

When the night shift came in, they saw the "6" and asked what it meant.

"The big boss was in here today," the day people said. "He asked us how many heats we made, and we told him six. He chalked it down on the floor."

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The next morning Schwab walked through the mill again. The night shift had rubbed out "6" and replaced it with a big "7."

When the day shift reported for work the next morning, they saw a big "7" chalked on the floor. So the night shift thought they were better than the day shift, did they? Well, they would show the night shift a thing or two. The crew pitched in with enthusiasm, and when they quit that night, they left behind them an enormous, swaggering "10." Things were stepping up.

Shortly this mill, which had been lagging way behind in production, was turning out more work than any other mill in the plant.

The principle?

Let Charles Schwab say it in his own words: "The way to get things done," says Schwab, "is to stimulate competition. I do not mean in a sordid, money-getting way, but in the desire to excel."

The desire to excel! The challenge! Throwing down the gauntlet! An infallible way of appealing to people of spirit.

Without a challenge, Theodore Roosevelt would never have been President of the United States. The Rough Rider, just back from Cuba, was picked for governor of New York State. The opposition discovered he was no longer a legal resident of the state, and Roosevelt, frightened, wished to withdraw. Then Thomas Collier Platt, then U.S. Senator from New York, threw down the challenge. Turning suddenly on Theodore Roosevelt, he cried in a ringing voice: "Is the hero of San Juan Hill a coward?"

Roosevelt stayed in the fight—and the rest is history. A challenge not only changed his life; it had a real effect upon the future of his nation.

"All men have fears, but the brave put down their fears and go forward, sometimes to death, but always to victory" was the motto of the King's Guard in ancient Greece. What greater challenge can be offered than the opportunity to overcome those fears?

When Al Smith was governor of New York, he was up against it. Sing Sing, at the time the most notorious penitentiary west of Devil's Island, was without a warden. Scandals had been sweeping through the prison walls, scandals and ugly rumors. Smith needed

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a strong man to rule Sing Sing—an iron man. But who? He sent for Lewis E. Lawes of New Hampton.

"How about going up to take charge of Sing Sing?" he said jovially when Lawes stood before him. "They need a man up there with experience."

Lawes was flabbergasted. He knew the dangers of Sing Sing. It was a political appointment, subject to the vagaries of political whims. Wardens had come and gone—one had lasted only three weeks. He had a career to consider. Was it worth the risk?

Then Smith, who saw his hesitation, leaned back in his chair and smiled. "Young fellow," he said, "I don't blame you for being scared. It's a tough spot. It'll take a big person to go up there and stay."

So Smith was throwing down a challenge, was he? Lawes liked the idea of attempting a job that called for someone "big."

So he went. And he stayed. He stayed, to become the most famous warden of his time. His book *20,000 Years in Sing Sing* sold into the hundreds of thousands of copies. His broadcasts on the air and his stories of prison life have inspired dozens of movies. His "humanizing" of criminals wrought miracles in the way of prison reform.

"I have never found," said Harvey S. Firestone, founder of the great Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, "that pay and pay alone would either bring together or hold good people. I think it was the game itself."

Frederic Herzberg, one of the great behavioral scientists, concurred. He studied in depth the work attitudes of thousands of people ranging from factory workers to senior executives. What do you think he found to be the most motivating factor—the one facet of the jobs that was most stimulating? Money? Good working conditions? Fringe benefits? No—not any of those. The one major factor that motivated people was the work itself. If the work was exciting and interesting, the worker looked forward to doing it and was motivated to do a good job.

That is what every successful person loves: the game. The chance for self-expression. The chance to prove his or her worth,

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to excel, to win. That is what makes footraces and hog-calling and pie-eating contests. The desire to excel. The desire for a feeling of importance.

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PRINCIPLE 12

Throw down a challenge.

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In a Nutshell

WIN PEOPLE TO YOUR WAY OF THINKING

PRINCIPLE 1

**The only way to get the best of an argument
is to avoid it.**

PRINCIPLE 2

**Show respect for the other person's opinions.
Never say,
"You're wrong."**

PRINCIPLE 3

If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically.

PRINCIPLE 4

Begin in a friendly way.

PRINCIPLE 5

Get the other person saying "yes, yes" immediately.

PRINCIPLE 6

Let the other person do a great deal of the talking.

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PRINCIPLE 7

Let the other person feel that the idea is his or hers.

PRINCIPLE 8

Try honestly to see things from the other person's point of view.

PRINCIPLE 9

Be sympathetic with the other person's ideas and desires.

PRINCIPLE 10

Appeal to the nobler motives.

PRINCIPLE 11

Dramatize your ideas.

PRINCIPLE 12

Throw down a challenge.